



CALIFORNIA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

SEPTEMBER 2004 AGENDA

☒ Federal Waiver

SUBJECT

Request by **Buena Vista Elementary School District** to waive No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB); Title IV, Part A, Section 4115 (a) (1) (c) to use Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities funds to support the cost of **Character Counts**, an education program that embraces six core ethical values (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship).

Waiver Number: Fed-13-2003

☒ Action

☒ Consent

RECOMMENDATION

☐ Approval ☒ Approval with conditions ☐ Denial

The district must submit a report to the Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office no later than September 2005 describing the progress made to evaluate the effectiveness of Character Counts. The district must submit a report to the Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office no later than September 2006 describing the final results of the evaluation. The district agrees to submit the evaluation results to the California Healthy Kids Resource Center (CHKRC), to the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), and to the University of Colorado's Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, for possible designation as a Validated Program, Model, or Blueprint. The district must also evaluate its own comprehensive prevention program in accordance with the district's approved Local Educational Agency Plan.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

State Board Policy 03-01 contains guidelines for approval of applications for waiver of the NCLB requirements that Title IV funds be used for "science-based" prevention programs. The State Board of Education has already approved similar waiver requests for other programs.

SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

This application requests a waiver so that the LEA may use Character Counts rather than a "science-based" program. Per State Board Policy 03-01, there are three conditions which must be satisfied before approval of the use of a "promising" prevention program rather than an already-established science-based program. Those conditions were met, and are listed in bold below.

Is the Program Innovative? Yes. The program uses the innovative youth development approach of character education to build positive strengths, assets, and character in students.

Does the program demonstrate substantial likelihood of success? Yes. Research has shown favorable results of character education, and the Character Counts program has been evaluated with favorable results. For example, a five-year study was conducted in South Dakota with a sample of 8,419 respondents. Tulare County Schools using Character Counts have received 28 Bonner Center Awards given by California State University, Fresno, based on their evaluation of the program.

Is there a plan and timeline for submitting the program for review and recognition? Yes. The additional material submitted by the school district includes a satisfactory plan and timeline. The district has agreed to send a progress report within one year, and a final report within two years.

Authority for Waiver: NCLB, Title IV, Part A, Section 4115(a)(3)

Period of request: September 2004 to September 2006.

Local board approval date(s): 11-12-03

FISCAL ANALYSIS (AS APPROPRIATE)

Programmatic change – no fiscal impact.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Consent Item: Backup materials, waiver request forms and supporting documents are not available for web viewing but are available for inspection in the Waiver Office.